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**Claim Amendments****Claim 1.** (cancelled)**Claim 2.** (cancelled)**Claim 3.** (cancelled)**Claim 4.** (previously presented)

The method of claim 15 further characterized by and including the step of providing a coating of reflective material over at least some of the interior surface of the furnace.

**Claim 5.** (cancelled)**Claim 6.** (currently amended)

The method of claim 15 further including the step of providing a ceramic or other high melting point support structure to support the tool steel metal workpiece.

**Claim 7.** (previously presented)

The method of claim 15 further including the step of providing an air atmosphere in the furnace.

**Claim 8.** (previously presented)

The method of claim 15 further including the step of

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providing a non-air environment in the furnace.

Claim 9. (previously presented)

The method of claim 15 further including the step of  
providing a vacuum environment in the furnace.

Claim 10. (cancelled)

Claim 11. (cancelled)

Claim 12. (cancelled)

Claim 13. (cancelled)

Claim 14. (cancelled)

Claim 15. (currently amended)

In a method of heat treating bars, blocks and other metal tool-steel workpieces the  
steps of

providing a heat treatment furnace of a size suitable to receive a tool-steel workpiece  
to be heat treated,

providing a heat source in the interior of the furnace consisting of a source of infrared  
heat energy,

subjecting the tool-steel workpiece to heat treatment by exposing said tool-steel  
workpiece to infrared heat energy from the infrared heat energy source and

maintaining said tool-steel workpiece stationary during subjection of the workpiece

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to heat treatment from the infrared energy source.

Claim 16. (currently amended)

In a method of heat treating bar, block and other metal tool-steel workpieces the steps of

providing a heat treatment furnace of a size suitable to receive a tool-steel workpiece to be heat treated,

providing a source of infrared heat energy in the interior of the furnace consisting of tungsten halogen lamp means,

subjecting the tool-steel workpiece to heat treatment by exposing said tool-steel workpiece to infrared heat energy from the tungsten halogen lamp means and

maintaining said tool-steel workpiece stationary during subjection of the workpiece to heat treatment from the infrared energy source.

Claim 17. (cancelled)

Claim 18. (cancelled)

Claim 19. (currently amended)

In a method of heat treating a metal tool-steel workpiece the steps of

providing a heat source in the interior of a furnace of a size suitable to receive a tool-steel workpiece to be heat treated,

providing a coating of reflective material selected from the group consisting of gold,

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silver and aluminum over at least some of the interior surface of the furnace, and  
subjecting the tool-steel workpiece to heat treatment by exposing said tool-steel  
workpiece to infrared heat energy from an infrared heat energy source.